AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Original) A method of treating or delaying the progression or onset of diabetes in a mammal comprising:

(a) identifying a mammal with an above-normal blood level of an inflammation marker protein; and

(b) administering to the mammal a therapeutically effective amount of an inhibitor of α_1-antitrypsin.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the step of identifying includes performing an immunoassay, a Western blot analysis, or a chromatographic separation of a sample of the mammal's blood.

3. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the mammal is a human.

4. (Original) The method of claim 3 wherein the method is effective to maintain the human's blood glucose level below 10 mM.

5. (Original) The method of claim 3 wherein the method is effective to maintain the human's blood glucose level between 4 mM and 6 mM.

6. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the inflammation marker protein is α_1-antitrypsin, C-reactive protein, interleukin-6 or a combination thereof.

7. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the inflammation marker protein is α_1-antitrypsin, the mammal is a human, and the above-normal blood level is greater than 1.3 mg α_1-antitrypsin / mL blood.

8. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the inhibitor of α_1-antitrypsin is gemfibrozil or an active derivative thereof.

9. (Original) The method of claim 8 wherein the mammal is a human, and wherein the therapeutically effective amount of gemfibrozil is about 300 to 1500 mg per day.

10. Cancelled

11. (Original) The method of claim 8 wherein gemfibrozil is administered daily, and the amount of gemfibrozil is adjusted daily to maintain a normal blood level of α_1-antitrypsin.

12. (Original) The method of claim 8 wherein gemfibrozil is administered once per day.

13. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the inhibitor of α_1-antitrypsin is lithocholic acid or an active derivative thereof.

14. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the method further comprises the step of:

(c) co-administering to the mammal an anti-diabetic medicament.

15. (Original) The method of claim 14 wherein the anti-diabetic medicament includes insulin.

16. (Original) The method of claim 14 wherein the anti-diabetic medicament comprises an insulin secretogogue, a biguanide, an inhibitor of α-glucosidase, a thiazolidinedione, or a combination thereof.

17. (Original) The method of claim 14 wherein the anti-diabetic medicament comprises human placental alkaline phosphatase.

18. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the method further comprises the step of:

(d) administering to the mammal an anti-inflammatory agent.

19. (Original) The method of claim 18 wherein the anti-inflammatory agent is a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug, acetylsalicylic acid, ibuprofen, or an active derivative thereof.

20. (Original) The method of claim 18 wherein the anti-inflammatory agent is a cyclooxygenase-2 inhibitor.

21. (Original) A method of enhancing or restoring the sensitivity of a mammal to the metabolic actions of insulin comprising:

(a) identifying a mammal with an above-normal blood level of an inflammation marker protein; and

(b) administering to the mammal an inhibitor of α_1-antitrypsin sufficient to enhance or restore the sensitivity of the mammal to the metabolic actions of insulin.

22. – 116. Cancelled